

August 2, 2002

The Honorable John D. Ashcroft
Attorney General of the United States
U.S. Department of Justice
10th Street and Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Attorney General:

I write to express my concern regarding the report by the Associated Press that your friend and advisor, Charles Polk, attempted to use his close relationship with you and your staff to profit from Oklahoma City bombing victims. I am also forwarding this letter to the Justice Department Inspector General for further investigation.

Approximately 120 survivors and victims' relatives from the 1995 bombing signed up for a lobbying campaign led by Mr. Polk in which he promised to get them payments from the September 11th victims fund in exchange for more than one quarter of their proceeds. This is now subject to a lawsuit and ethics complaint. I am concerned that this is yet another example of shameless profiteering by close associates of the Bush Administration.

Because of concerns that Mr. Polk has used his influence at the Justice Department for personal financial gain, I request that you respond to the following questions in writing. (1) At any time did you or your staff encourage Mr. Polk to seek financial compensation for Oklahoma victims from the September 11th fund or indicate agreement with his aims? (2) Have you or any member of your staff discussed compensation for Oklahoma City bombing victims with Mr. Polk? (3) When did Mr. Polk contact September 11 fund administrator Kenneth Feinberg and what was discussed? (4) At any time did you, David Israelite, Kenneth Feinberg, or any other member of your staff discuss Mr. Polk's financial interest in the Oklahoma City victims?

I would appreciate your attention to this matter. If you have any questions regarding this request please feel free to contact me or my staff at (202)225-6504.

Sincerely,

John Conyers, Jr
Ranking Member

cc: Mr. Glen A. Fine, Inspector General